



State of Connecticut

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STATE CAPITOL

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To: Chairman Slossberg, Chairman Morin, Ranking Member McLachlan, Ranking Member Hwang and members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee

From: Rep. Tim Ackert, 8th Assembly District

Date: March 21, 2011

Re: Raised SB No 1196 *AAC The Conveyance Of Certain Parcels Of State Land (Sec 9)*.

For the record I am Representative Tim Ackert and here to testify in support of Section 9 of SB 1196. Section 9 would allow the Coventry Historical Society (CHS) to sell property located at 2187 South Street (Sprague House) in order to use proceeds of the sale to assist with maintenance at two other properties CHS owns. The Strong Porter House is located across the street from the Nathan Hale Homestead and hosts many educational tours for historians and school children. The Brick School House also located in Coventry actually holds classes for local school children to see how education was delivered in the nineteenth century and even as late as 1950.

The sale of the Sprague house will also help to preserve this early 1800's home. Since the Coventry Historical Society has limited funds the focus of repairs has been to the Strong Porter House and accessory structures, leaving limited resources for the Sprague house. New owners will revive this home located next to the Nathan Hale Homestead and preserve the historic character of the neighborhood.

I have seen the dedication the Coventry Historical Society members have for these historic properties. The fundraising events, tag sales, home tours, early American dinners, and hours of caring for these homes are a testament to their desire of preserving history. Some of the money will be used to replace roofs, rebuild a large barn and replace an outhouse destroyed by a fallen tree. This money will also be used to leverage matching money from the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation.

Two Special Acts of the legislature (63-365; 1965) conveyed this state property to the CHS and included language in the deed that allows the Sprague House only to be used as a meeting house and museum.

The proposed language in SB 1196, Section 9 allows CHS to sell the property and use all proceeds for other properties owned by CHS.

I respectfully ask the Committee to keep this section in any final conveyance bill that reaches the full legislature for consideration. I appreciate your time and attention to this important issue.